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JUN 11

## WESTERN ALLIES BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN?

By William Henry Chamberlin

As the Cold War has heated up, American government circles and American public opinion have been showing increased interest in the possibility that there may be valuable silent allies of the West among the regimented peoples of the Soviet Union and its satellite states. A Committee for Free Europe, established for some time, has been trying to coordinate and help the activities of the political refugees from the East European countries. Of more recent origin are two private committees which hope to perform a similar function in regard to the Russians and the other peoples of the Soviet Union.

Congressmen, commentators and others have been suggesting various schemes for reaching the peoples behind the Iron Curtain with messages of freedom and friendship. Some of these schemes are naive and even a little fantastic. But the instinct to learn about and stimulate any anti-Communist moods that may exist is thoroughly sound.

Now, and for a considerable time in the future, there are and will be two main deterrents to aggressive Soviet action against Western Europe. The first is American capacity to inflict terrific destruction on Soviet centers of industry and communications by long-range air strikes with atomic bombs. The second is the uncertainty of the Soviet rulers about the morale of their subjects, in the event of a protracted large-scale war.

Of all the propaganda myths of the late war the most absurd was the unity of the Soviet peoples behind Stalin's regime. Two years ago I spent a day motoring through the hills of Southern Bavaria with a most interesting companion. He was Herwarth von Bittenfeld, an officer with previous Russian experience who had been associated with a former German military attaché in Moscow, General Koestring, in recruiting war prisoners and other Soviet citizens for service in the German Army.

"If it had not been for the criminal stupid brutality of Nazi civil administration policy", von Bittenfeld declared, "the Soviet regime would have been overthrown in 1941 or 1942 with the sympathetic aid of many of the Russians themselves. Even with this handicap, and Koestring and I

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were fighting all the time to get more decent treatment for our Russian recruits, we raised about half a million soldiers. Some of these were in the army of General Vlasov. Others were in special nationality and group units. We found the Ukrainians, the Cossacks and the Mohammedan peoples especially hostile to the Soviet regime."

The Soviet Government tried hard to conceal these evidences of disaffection. It never suggested the extradition of Koestring and von Bittenfeld as "war criminals", because it was unwilling to call attention to this proof of internal weakness. But the lesson has not been forgotten. It remains a factor of considerable weight on the negative side when the rulers in the Kremlin weigh the advisability of all-out war.

II

The formation of the Free Europe Committee was a natural sequel to the complete failure to establish normal relations between the United States and the Soviet satellite governments. Throughout the new Soviet sphere of influence American embassies were systematically harassed and spied on and subjected to restrictions on travel. American representatives were familiar scapegoats in purge trials. The sentencing to a long term of imprisonment of the American businessman, Robert Vogeler, in Hungary showed that an American passport no longer assured elementary security behind the Iron Curtain. The work of independent newspapermen was made difficult in all these countries, impossible in some.

The National Committee for a Free Europe, of which the veteran retired diplomat Joseph Clark Grew is Chairman, encouraged the formation of national councils, composed of leading political refugees from Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria and Rumania. It proved impossible to form a Polish council because of the strong factional disagreements among the Polish exiles. The policy of encouraging Tito's regime as a prospective force of resistance to Soviet expansion blocked the formation of a Yugoslav council.

The Committee has also sponsored a number of research projects which give employment to refugee intellectuals and add to the information about conditions in the Iron Curtain countries. Newspapers are combed for decrees and items which throw light on social and economic conditions. Studies of specific phases of industry and agriculture are undertaken.

One of the more striking achievements of the Committee was the signing in Philadelphia of a "declaration of liberation from Communism" by 225 former active political leaders in Poland, Rumania, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Albania, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

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This document avoids the divisive issues which exist between the nations of Eastern Europe and between groups in these nations. Its signers pledge themselves to the ideals of political and civil liberty, social progress and closer European federation.

The Committee has not achieved and probably does not expect swift spectacular results. But it hopes through radio talks, delivered by exiled leaders to their countrymen, by other means of contact, some of these necessarily secret, by uniting, as far as possible, the efforts of anti-Communist individuals and groups, to keep alive a spirit of resistance that will some day bear fruit.

III

Until recently it has been American official policy to withhold encouragement from any attempt to promote subversion within the Soviet Union. During the last few months there has been a change in this policy. Efforts of Soviet political emigrant groups to carry on activity among the Red Army troops in Germany and in the Soviet Union itself, and to set up centers of political and cultural action in Germany, are meeting a benevolent attitude on the part of the American government.

This new American policy suffers from the handicap of a very bad start. The United States Government at Yalta accepted the ignominy of a fugitive slave law. It was agreed that all Soviet citizens found in the American occupation zones in Europe should be repatriated, by force if necessary. General Vlasov, leader of the most promising anti-Communist movement which developed in Russia during the war, was handed over to the Russians with some of his lieutenants and promptly executed.

There were scenes of heart-rending inhumanity when Soviet citizens who feared nothing so much as repatriation were forced into cars bound for the Soviet frontier at the point of the bayonet. Great Britain fully shared the disgrace and stupidity of these forced repatriations. This practice of rounding up and forcing back unwilling Soviet subjects ceased after Soviet-Western relations deteriorated. But it left an atmosphere of understandable distrust among the Russians.

At the present time there are four main political groupings among the several hundred thousand Russian emigrants in Europe and the United States. Largest in numbers are the National Union of Labor (sometimes known as Solidarists) and the Union of Struggle for the Liberation of the Peoples of Russia, often referred to as SBONR, from the Russian initials of its title. The first of these grew up among the children of the old Russian émigrés in the Balkans and Central Europe. The second is composed of the remnants of Vlasov's followers. These two groups have been

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most successful in recruiting members among the latest crop of Russian emigrants.

The other two organizations, the League of Struggle for Freedom of the People, with headquarters in New York, and the Union of Struggle for Freedom of Russia, in which the most prominent figure is Professor Melgunov, in Paris, are largely composed of older emigrants, belonging to political parties of the moderate left.

There are also small monarchist groups and a number of non-Russian nationality organizations, among whom the Ukrainians are the most numerous and the most potentially significant. Ukrainian guerrillas were fighting against the Red Army in the wooded mountain country of the Carpathians for years after the end of the war.

IV

It is not easy to weld together these Russian groups, with their personal and ideological differences; and it is still more difficult to find a common platform acceptable to the Russians, who would like to see a non-Communist Russia within its historic frontiers and the Ukrainians, Caucasians and others, many of whom are ardent separatists. However, the attempt to reach the Soviet peoples by all available sources is well worth making. The intensity of Soviet espionage and terrorism betrays nervousness. Even a very small thing, the desertion of a group of Red Army soldiers or the distribution of anti-Communist literature weighs in the scales as a deterrent to risking war.

The wisest general rule for the United States to follow would be not to commit itself to any decision about future boundaries or to become embroiled in nationality and group differences. A scrapping of the immigration provisions of the McCarran Act, or at least a very great relaxation in their administration, is a prerequisite for effective psychological warfare for the Russians. Under present conditions many Russians who flee to the West at the risk of their lives find themselves barred from the United States because they served in the Red Army or because they once belonged to a Soviet trade-union (in which membership is virtually compulsory) or to a Communist youth organization.

It would be wishful thinking and self-deception to expect that any magic blast on a propaganda trumpet will bring down the towering edifice of Soviet dictatorship. But the attempt to reach the Soviet peoples should be made by every practicable means and with our best brains. For, as one of the most thoughtful of Russia's political exiles, David Dallin, writes:

> "The people are the touchstone of Stalin's system and of Stalin's policy. Without and against the Russian people, neither a peace campaign nor war can be won by his opponents."

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Not Merely Gossip *A Supplement to* Human Events Vol. VIII, No. 23

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By Frank C. Hanighen June 6, 1951

TRIP TO PARIS: While Acheson dodges and squirms before the Senatorial Committee, those close to the situation in the White House and State Department keep their eyes fixed on Paris. Not the Paris where diplomats wrangle about agendas for future and fruitless conferences, but the Paris where General Eisenhower has his GHQ.

The reason for such intense interest in our European commander is, as follows: Acheson has done so badly (witness his lame answers to the probing questions of Senator Brewster on June 5) that Administration circles now again turn to the hope that their General will come back to the Capital and testify. Did he not rescue the situation in Congress for the Administration last winter? Did he not save the "troops for Europe" policy at that time? Today, it is deeply and almost emotionally felt that he could bring the hearings to a sensational close with a denial of the MacArthur thesis and a reiteration of "Europe First".

Now, all this may be purely wishful thinking, but it is a fact that White House coteries and their collaborators on Capitol Hill believe that General Bradley during his current visit to Europe is seeking to persuade Eisenhower to return and testify.

It is particularly (and, indeed, anxiously) desired that the European Commander visit the Hill on, or about, the 13th of June. For on that day, General MacArthur is scheduled to address the Texas legislature. If this be called a plan for "jamming", well -- it is.

Will Ike oblige? Canvassing opinions among the set in New York who exert the preponderant influence on the General's thinking, we can discover no belief that he will. These circles say that their General keeps informed on political currents at home, realizes the deep sentiment for MacArthur among Republicans and will avoid any move which might prejudice his nomination at the GOP convention next year.

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THE OLD CROWD: If Bradley does appeal to Eisenhower to take the above course, his word might well carry weight. Omar Bradley and Dwight Eisenhower belong to the same "crowd". It is little understood outside the services that there is a strong tie, a strong relationship over many years, which plays a big role in the attitudes of individual officers, not the least when they appear before committees on the Hill.

Those who know the Army well realize that it has been long split into two factions: one stemming originally from Pershing, the succession being carried on by Marshall (Pershing's favorite); the other composed of MacArthur, his friends and admirers. Varying ideas on defense strategy, varying political attitudes and the usual struggles for promotions mark the composition of both these factions.

There occur, at times, changes in this line-up, shifts of individuals from one group to another. Thus, in the Thirties, Major Eisenhower was "fired" by MacArthur in the Philippines, came home and was snapped up by the Marshall clique. When Marshall boosted the comparatively unknown Eisenhower to high place, this was interpreted in army circles as a flat defiance to MacArthur and his men.

Likewise (although it is not too well known among the public), General A. C. Wedemeyer was formerly a member of the "Marshall team". Under Marshall early in the war, Captain Wedemeyer was made a key man in war planning, was promoted to the rank of Major and, during the war, finally to the rank of Lieutenant General. At that time, the man who later wrote the famous report on China was definitely classified as a "Marshall man". But, in post-war years, Wedemeyer broke with Marshall over China policy and thereafter it was thought that he had joined the MacArthur crowd. This impression may, in part, explain Wedemeyer's "exile" from the Pentagon to the

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Pacific Coast. A few weeks ago, he offered his resignation from the Army -- as have many high officers who favored MacArthur.

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AMBASSADOR: "The State Department should send an Ambassador to the Chinese Nationalist Government on the island of Formosa" -- such is the demand of Rep. Lawrence Smith (Wis.), prominent member of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House. There is no U.S. Ambassador in residence on the island, where Marshal Chiang Kai-shek has the capital-in-exile of his regime. Mr. J. Leighton Stuart, technically the Ambassador, is old and ill, and the State Department has done nothing to replace him. Since Assistant Secretary Dean Rusk talked in favorable terms of the Nationalist Government and decried the claims of the Communist Chinese Government to represent the people -- so argues Mr. Smith -- therefore we should honor, by full diplomatic relations, the only government representative of the Chinese people.

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CASUALTIES: At the hearings on Capitol Hill, General Bradley gave out the figure of total U.S. casualties in the Korean war -- 141,000. This revelation startled members of Congress, for it added about 80,000 to the number recently announced by the Defense Department. The weekly release from the Pentagon, it should be explained, covers only battle casualties; Bradley's figure included both battle and non-battle losses. The latter category is made up of casualties from accidents behind the lines, frostbite, venereal diseases and other forms of illness.

Why hasn't this total figure been released before? Certainly, no one can seriously contend that it was withheld for reasons of security -- to prevent the enemy from obtaining sensitive information. For, Bradley's testimony was made public after scrutiny of the censor, Admiral Arthur Davis, who blue-pencils the text of testimony in the Committee room.

The only conclusion one can draw is that the Administration has kept these vital statistics from the American people for a political reason: to prevent rising criticism of the conduct of the war.

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RFC: The Senate Committee on Banking and Currency took four years to find out that an RFC loan of $80,000,000 to the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad "was not warranted by the financial condition of the railroad". Its report goes on to say that the loan was "irregular" and that the lending agency "was a party to a collusive proceeding".

Some time ago HUMAN EVENTS had occasion to look at the financial statements of two concerns which had obtained comparatively small loans from the RFC. Both were, by the standards of even lenient credit checking, bankrupt. We then made inquiries, both "on the Hill" and of the Federal Reserve Board, as to whether any study had been made of the financial standing of a reasonable number of the borrowers; there are nearly 15,000 of them. Our inquiries brought the reply that no such study had been made, except possibly by the RFC itself, and that agency had not made it public.

We have reason to presume that, regardless of "irregularities", the borrowers are all in about the same state of solvency as the two whose balance sheets we examined. The law requires the borrower to prove to the RFC that he had been turned down by private banking institutions. The directors of such institutions are in the business of making loans, but because they have a responsibility toward the people who own the money they lend, they scrutinize the safety of their loans. When they turn down an application, it is because the prospective buyer will in their judgment not be able to repay the loan when due. The RFC, handling the taxpayers' money, has no such inhibition.

It is a reasonable inference that many of the loans made by the RFC will never be repaid. The agency can conceal this fact by extending the due date, or by making

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additional loans to delinquent concerns so that they can repay previous loans. In this way, the official solvency of the RFC can be maintained, and by lending money to borrowers to pay interest due, it can show a "profit".

The public is aroused by "irregularities" of a spectacular nature -- such as the mink coat incident, or the jobs taken by RFC officials with concerns to whom loans had been made, etc. The principal disqualification of the agency is not that it is subject to "irregularities" -- which one must always expect in a political establishment -- but that it underwrites insolvency with the taxpayers' money.

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PORTRAIT OF JOHNSTON: For some obscure reason, a number of businessmen look favorably on Mr. Eric Johnston, still regard him as "one of ours". This view lingers even after his demand for stiff controls on business and farmers in his speech of June 3 -- one of those streamlined, foam-rubber orations typical of the speech factories of the Administration. Any review of his record as "Economic Stabilizer" during past months shows him nobly indignant towards some businessmen, but charitably tender towards the labor politicos who are now in the ascendant in the bureaucratic apparatus. Johnston is indeed a man-on-the-make and he is sufficiently wise in the folkways of Washington to play with the big battalions.

During the days of Hitler in the Thirties, there was much talk about how Dr. Hjalmar Schacht, as a non-Nazi businessman in the Nazi administration, accomplished good work by tempering the ferocity of the National Socialist regime. But there were some observers who claimed it was actually the other way 'round. Schacht -- they said -- far from playing the role of businessman (high collar and all) among the Nazis, actually filled the role of a National Socialist among German businessmen who were seduced by his favorable version of Hitler's economic policies.

Johnston, of course is no Nazi, nor Socialist. But there is somewhat of a parallel. We have today in Washington an increasingly national socialist regime, called the "Fair Deal". Johnston (arrow collar and all) serves the purposes of the regime as he addresses businessmen and a public which by and large still considers him a knight errant of free enterprise. It's one way to get ahead in Washington.

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FOREIGN BOONDOGGLE: As Acheson suavely ducked the questions of Senators, few suspected that his Department is preparing a one-two punch for Congress just as soon as the Big Hearings end. We mean the billions of "foreign aid" which the State Department will try to push over on both Democrats and Republicans in Congress.

It has been too easily assumed that Southern Democrats and Republicans could block or drastically cut these requests from the Administration. But the fact is that the Senators have been so preoccupied with the MacArthur hearings that they have had no time to prepare for the battalions of international boondoggling.

But the anticipated push may run into strong opposition. It has been gradually dawning on members of Congress -- and not only on the usual economy advocates -- that the sums we have literally given away abroad, with nothing substantial to show, mount to a tremendous figure. Up to 1950, the official figure for 10 years is, in round figures, $81 billion (according to a study made by the Legislative Reference Service of the Library of Congress and placed in the Congressional Record, May 4, 1950, pages 6419-6425). With what the Administration foreign planners ask now, or expect to ask, the total will rise during the coming months to about $100 billion.

The fact is that some on the Hill realize that these funds have been expended abroad without any adequate accounting or examination of how they have been spent. There was a "watchdog" committee, but that has become a virtual dead letter in the past year. Anyhow, it was concerned only with ECA spending. In addition to the Marshall Plan Organization, the following voracious groups have been using up funds -- GARIOA, Greek-Turkish Aid, Inter-American Aid, Point Four and many others.

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Recognition of this situation is spreading on the Hill. To counteract the appeal of outstretched palms which -- it is expected -- will face Congress after the MacArthur hearing subsides, economy proponents have under consideration a new committee under Senator McClellan, a sound Southern Democrat. This committee would be designed to really investigate foreign aid. It is believed that if the McClellan group is formed and receives support from the overburdened taxpayers, it can at least reduce if not stop the squandering of money abroad.

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THE NEBRASKA STORY: The approaching storm over foreign aid in Washington is heralded by some lightning flashes from the far-off prairies. Senator Hugh Butler (Nebr.) has vividly brought home to American communities the real cost of our foreign boondoggling. In a speech to the Senate (June 1), the senior Senator from Nebraska outlined the magnitude of aid abroad since pre-war years. Such costs from July 1, 1940 down to and including current proposals for such overseas assistance adds up to about $104 billions, as the Senator calculates.

To visualize the real impact of such expenditure, Butler took as an example the city of Hastings, Nebr., whose population is about 20,000. The people in that community have grappled in post-war years with the problem of expanding schools to take care of increased juvenile population. On the day after the President asked $9.5 billions, a school bond election was held in Hastings. The voters rejected this proposal to issue $1,850,000.

Why? Butler pointed out that the proportionate share of Hastings in paying the cost of foreign aid in the past 12 years has been an estimated $13,893,000. And the share of the foreign aid program for the whole state of Nebraska has come to $923,350,000, nearly a billion dollars. The rejection of the school bond proposal in Hastings (and other cities have followed suit), said Butler, "is significant. The people of my state are so fed up with the whole idea of borrow, tax and spend, that they take it out on every spending proposal, for spending on any level of government, no matter how worthy the program."

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GERMAN VIEW OF MACARTHUR: MacArthur's proposed (but rejected) strategy meets with the support of one of Germany's ablest generals. Our former Far East Commander's guess that Russia would not make it all-out war in Asia if we bombed Manchuria coincides with the view of Lieutenant General Koestring, for many years German Military Attaché in Moscow and regarded as probably the best German military authority on Russian strategic thinking. Mr. Karl Von Weigand, who covers Europe for the Hearst newspapers, has just interviewed Koestring and in an interesting dispatch (New York Journal American, June 2) reported that Koestring thinks Russia's economic potential would prove inadequate for an all-out conflict in the Far East. This German officer, who was born and raised in Moscow, speaks with a slight Russian accent and knows well both European and Siberian Russia, remarked:

"Russia needs time, is playing for time and America is given the time essential to the vast preparations in the Soviet Union. Russia's preparations are for defensive, not offensive, war in her enormous space and vast distances. Stalin is a cautious man. His offensive weapon is Communism. For Russia to strike first militarily would be a departure from Russian tradition and history."

It is Koestring's opinion that the ravages inflicted by the Germans on Russia in the last war have prevented the Kremlin from sufficiently rebuilding and expanding industry. "Russia", says the General, "despite Stalin's superhuman efforts cannot yet be ready to meet such an opponent as America on a 50/50 basis for victory." He agrees with MacArthur that the Kremlin would not accept the Siberian Far East and Outer Mongolia as the battleground for a major war effort. He could not understand why Marshall and Bradley seemed afraid to take risks of provoking Russia.



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